

FROM WASHINGTON OFFICE  
W. BARRY GARRETT, REGIONAL EDITOR  
200 Maryland Ave., N. E., Washington, D. C. 20002  
Telephone: 544-4226 (AC-202)

October 8, 1965

WASHINGTON (BP)-- The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, in semi-annual meeting here, proposed a set of church-state principles relating to the "war on poverty" for consideration by Baptist agencies and churches.

In other action the Baptist Joint Committee set October 4-6 as the time for the 1967 Religious Liberty Conference. This year's annual conference, sponsored by the Committee, was on the theme, "Church, State, and Public Funds." The 1966 conference will be October 5-7 on "The Christian's Role Through Church and State."

Re-elected chairman of the Committee was Walter Pope Binns of Falls Church, Va. Bryan F. Archibald of Northern Baptist Seminary, and Alton L. Wheeler, executive secretary of the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference, were named first and second vice presidents. C. Emanuel Carlson is executive director.

The church-state principles proposed by the Committee resulted from church-state problems in some programs of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

The proposals place emphasis on public administration and the use of public facilities in carrying out the programs of the "war on poverty." The statement recognizes, however, that emergency situations may require interim arrangements to avoid sacrificing the well-being of people.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs is sponsored by eight Baptist groups.

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Following is the text of the proposed church-state principles relating to the Economic Opportunity Act:

Proposed Policies for Baptist Agencies and Churches  
Respecting the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

October 6, 1965

We, the members of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, recognize that many of our nation's people face serious economic, educational and health deficiencies. We commend the efforts of the government to come to grips with these problems. Congress has enacted bold legislation to cope with these acute social problems. We are concerned, however, that all attempts to deal with these problems, both through the enactment and administration of appropriate programs, be consistent with the following general principles and procedures in church-state relations which we affirm.

I. Program administration.

1. We favor public administration of all such programs.
2. If a public agency is not available to administer such a program in a given community, we would look with favor upon a broadly representative ad hoc committee in a local community to administer such programs.
3. We do not favor nation, state or local ad hoc committees whose representatives are selected on the basis of religious affiliation to promote or administer such programs.
4. We are opposed to any program supported by government funds being placed under the administration of a church or church-sponsored institution.

II. Facilities.

1. We favor the use of public facilities for all such programs. However, if

public facilities are not available, church facilities could be used provided that (a) the programs are not under church sponsorship or administration, (b) the use of church facilities does not prejudice the program, and (c) no public funds shall be used to build up the resources, the programs, or the equipment of any church or other organization dedicated to religious objectives.

### III. Contracts for special services.

For those programs which cannot be carried out under the above principles, contracts with public or private agencies may be utilized on the basis of payment for services rendered to accomplish the desired objectives. In such cases we hold that all contracts and agreements shall explicitly protect the non-sectarian nature of all such public programs conducted under the authority of the Constitution of the United States. We further hold that all persons recruited or employed for services in such contractual programs (a) should be selected without references to religious affiliations or positions, (b) should be fully protected in the free exercise of their own religion, and (c) should not be called upon to perform official duties which involve the exercise of official powers in behalf of any religious programs.

Vatican Council Asks New  
Views Of Other Religions

By W. Barry Garrett

VATICAN CITY (BP)-- The controversial document on Catholic relations with Jews is again before Vatican Council II, this time with notable deletions and additions to previous proposals.

What started out as a chapter on Catholic ecumenical relations with emphasis on the Jews has now turned out to be a separate "Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions." As from the beginning of the focal point of public interest is the section on the Jews, but what is being largely overlooked is the approach to other non-Christian religions.

The purpose of the statement is to positionize the Roman Catholic Church against anti-Semitism, both in and outside the church, and to say that Jews of today as a group cannot be held guilty of the death of Christ as a result of the action of a small group of Jews centuries ago.

Debate for and against the declaration has been intense. Many bishops feel that the council cannot adjourn without a clear statement on the problem. Others are as insistent that the church would involve itself in political and racial problems in the Near East if it said anything on the subject.

At the insistence of many bishops the Jewish question was deleted from the decree on ecumenism and enlarged to include a Catholic approach not only to Jews but to other non-Christian religions.

The new version of the declaration eliminates the term "deicide" (God-killer) in referring to the Jews. Some bishops want this term used in the text in order to be specific in naming the sin for which they do not hold the Jews accountable. Others say that the term aroused hostile emotions and should be eliminated from Christian vocabulary. They insist that the new text is as strong, if not stronger, as the one of last year, even though this controversial word is not in it.

Here is a portion of the new version of the declaration on the Jews:

"Although the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ (cf. Jn. 19,6), nevertheless what happened to Christ in His passion cannot be attributed to all Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor to the Jews of today. Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected by God or accursed, as if this follows from Holy Scriptures. May all see to it, then, that in catechetical work or in preaching the word of God they do not teach anything that is inconsistent with the truth of the Gospel and with the spirit of Christ.

"Moreover, the Church, which rejects every persecution against any man, mindful of the common patrimony with the Jews and moved not by political reasons but by the Gospel's spiritual love, deploras hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone."

In other sections of the declaration the Council discusses the role of other religions in answering the basic religious questions of mankind. Such questions are listed: "What is man? What is the meaning, the aim of our life? What is the moral good, what sin? Whence suffering and what purpose does it serve? What are death, judgment and retribution after death? Whence do we come? Where are we going?"

After discussing briefly Hinduism and Buddhism and "other religions", the document says, "The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions." It then charts a future course for the Church by the following paragraph:

"The Church exhorts her sons that through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, carried out with prudence and love and in witness to the Christian faith and life, they recognize, preserve and promote those spiritual and moral goods as well as those socio-cultural values found among these men."

In relation to Islam, which has common historical rootage with Christianity, the Council declaration proposes this:

"In the course of centuries quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Moslems. This Synod urges all to forget the past, and to work for mutual under-

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standing and to preserve and promote together social justice, as well as peace and freedom, for the benefit of all mankind."

In a concluding section the Council document proclaims universal brotherhood of all men and excludes every form of discrimination. Specifically, it says:

"The Church thus reproves, as foreign to the mind of Christ, any discrimination against men or harrassment of them because of their race, colour, condition in life, or religion."

The new document is now up for voting by the Council. The decision will be whether or not last year's document will stand or the new one will be approved or if further changes will be made.

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**AIR MAIL**

THEO SOMMERKAMP  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
460 JAMES ROBERTSON PARK  
NASHVILLE 3 TENN

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